The Message That Trio Brought Back From Hanoi, Pps. 2-3

How Do You Keep A Strong Foothold in A Quicksand?

"You don't take a firm stand in quicksand," he [City Councilman Theodore R. Kupferman, Republican candidate for Mayor Lindsay's vacant seat in Congress] said, "The only question I see is, How do we terminate our involvement there as soon as possible." Mr. Orin Lehman, the Democratic candidate, said he believed the U.S. should push for negotiations to end the war but at the same time should keep a strong foothold in the embattled Southeast Asian country. "We just can't pull out of there," he said. "But we also don't want to go all-out and bomb Hanoi." His position was close to that of the Democratic Administration.

—New York Times, *Jan. 7. This special election Feb. 8 offers a referendum on peace. We strongly urge support for the Republican candidate.*

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Lyndon Johnson's Bay of Pigs

A week before the President's State of the Union message a White House dispatch on the Associated Press ticker few papers used (CR 4:15P 1/6) said "successive State Department drafts of proposed language for a major Johnson statement on Vietnam" had been rejected and Johnson with the aid of his staff was coming up with his own language. The State of the Union message made this easy to believe. Unlike the Johns Hopkins speech, which attacked China and blamed it (in the State Department's familiar litany) for aggression in Tibet, India and Korea as well as Vietnam, the State of the Union message made only one passing reference to Peking, "In recent months a number of nations have cast out those who would subject them to the ambitions of mainland China." The milder tone may reflect the warning in the Mansfield report that "the tacit consent of China" might be necessary for a settlement with Hanoi. The message also eschewed another favorite State Department theme. Unlike the President's formal press conference statement of last July 28, it did not compare peace in Vietnam to Munich. Last time there was a Soviet emissary in Hanoi, trying to negotiate peace, we bombed the North. This time a State of the Union message calls for expanded trade with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and asks Congress for authority to remove the special tariff barriers which restrict East-West trade. As if in further consideration for Soviet susceptibilities, the message did not mention NATO, much less German hopes of nuclear sharing, but spoke instead vaguely of "the community of the Atlantic" and of "the unity of Europe."

They're Negotiating Already

This was a State of the Union message which did its best to avoid the rasping and the inflammatory. It lent credibility to the speculation in that same AP dispatch of differences with State. "Some Johnson aides," it said, "if not the President, apparently feel Rusk has taken too skeptical a stance toward peace moves." Neither in its rhetoric nor its recommendations was this a warlike speech. It was an exercise in emotional de-escalation. Its emphasis was on domestic reform. The public exchange now going on between Hanoi and Washington may be read as the beginning of a negotiation, and as in any other bargaining session the terms are being whittled down. The Johns Hopkins speech spoke only of negotiations with "governments concerned." Now the President says "We will meet at any Conference table . . . and consider the views of any groups." This change seems a step closer to recognition that the National Liberation Front must be a party to any negotiation. The passage in the Johns Hopkins speech which most alarmed Hanoi and the NLF demanded "an independent South Vietnam—securely guaranteed and able to shape its own relationships to all others." Now, after declaring for "a free decision on the great question of reunification," the President says "We will withdraw our soldiers once South Vietnam is securely guaranteed the right to shape its own future." This narrows the distance between the U.S. and NLF positions, as may be seen from the views (on pps. 2-3) brought back from Hanoi by Staughton Lynd, Tom Hayden and Herbert Aptheker. There is also the offer, "We will work for a cease-fire now or once discussions have begun."

This offer to end the shooting may usefully be read in the light of the Mansfield report which says that negotiations accompanied by a cease-fire "would serve to stabilize a situa-

(Continued on Page Four)

Sudden Death and Precarious Peace

It was said 18 months ago when Nehru died that if he had lived, he and his friend, Sheikh Abdullah, the saintly and long persecuted (by India) leader of Kashmir might have worked out a peaceful settlement with Pakistan. We can only hope that 18 months hence it will not be said that if Shastri had lived, the Tashkent declaration might have led to final solution of the Kashmir problem which inflames the minds and wastes the energies of the kindred peoples of India and Pakistan. The outlook is not promising. The Tashkent declaration was itself a last-minute miracle. Though it did not touch on the Kashmir issue directly, it provided for a pullback of armed forces, it created a better atmosphere between the two countries and it reestablished confidence between Ayub and Shastri. Whether this confidence can be maintained with his successor is a question. Moscow deserves applause for this triumph in the search for peace, and we can only hope this will whet its appetite for a similar thaw in the relations between Washington and Hanoi.

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"If You See President Johnson," Premier Pham Van Dong Said in Hanoi . . .

Instead of prosecuting Prof. Staughton Lynd, Tom Hayden and Dr. Herbert Aptheker for their trip to Hanoi, the government ought to pay their expenses, a small fraction of the money spent by CIA to find out what Hanoi is thinking. Their findings are probably a good deal more reliable. Here are high-lights from the statements they made on returning to New York Jan. 9. The full text of the Lynd-Hayden statement will be in the January issue of Viet Report, *133 W. 72d St., New York City 10023 (50c) and the text of Dr. Aptheker's in the Jan. 16 Sunday* Worker, *23 W. 26th St., NYC 10010 (15c). Dr. Aptheker did not disagree with the Lynd-Hayden statement but filed one of his own. As a leading American Communist theoretician, he had access to party circles in Hanoi. This gives special interest to his report.*

By Prof. Staughton Lynd and Tom Hayden

We think that as seen from Hanoi there is a deep inconsistency in U.S. policy between a peaceful posture looking toward a negotiated settlement, and an interventionist posture which has in view the permanent partition of Vietnam and an expanded war. . . . American Ambassadors have gone all over the world to "knock on any door" seeking peace. But Premier Pham Van Dong, in response to our questions, stated unequivocally that the U.S. government had not made contact with the government of the DRV [North Vietnam], either at Hanoi or through DRV Ambassadors in other capitals, since President Johnson spoke of knocking on any door Dec. 20. We assume that the U.S. in keeping with previous policy, has *not sought to make contact with NLF representatives* either. To those with whom we spoke in Vietnam, it appears that the U.S. knocks on all doors except the doors of those whom it is fighting. They wonder if the U.S. is searching for peace or mainly attempting to soften its image before negative public opinion abroad and at home. . . .

The North Vietnamese do not trust an offer to negotiate unconditionally which, as they see it, represents only one side of America's two-sided policy. They want to know if the United States has clearly decided that Vietnam should be united rather than partitioned. They want to make sure that the U.S. has abandoned any plan to make South Vietnam a military base for the U.S. in Southeast Asia. Thus "Observer" stated in Nhan Dan for Jan. 3 that the so-called unconditional negotiations offered by the U.S. in fact contains four conditions: 1. U.S. troops will stay in South Vietnam as long as the U.S. thinks it necessary; 2. South Vietnam must be an independent, sovereign state; 3. The U.S. refuses to recognize the NLF [National Liberation Front]; 4. "The North Vietnamese people are not allowed to support [the words are those of "Observer"] "the patriotic struggle of their compatriots to the South." . . .

Thus the negative responses of the DRV to the bombing pause appears to stem, first, from observation of warlike acts in South Vietnam which have accompanied the pause, and second from uncertainty as to whether the U.S. has really given up its plans for an indefinite occupation of South Vietnam and decided to return to the Geneva agreements. President Johnson's 14-point program appears to come close to the diplomatic statements of the NLF and DRV, especially in accepting the Geneva agreements as a basis of settlement, in denying any desire to keep troops indefinitely in South Vietnam, and in approving reunification.

However, the North Vietnamese see two crucial inadequacies in the new U.S. peace position. First, they wonder how the U.S. can accept the Geneva agreements as the basis for settlement but treat the Four Points merely as a matter which could be discussed. Hanoi considers its Four Points to be the essence of the Geneva settlement, especially the provisions requiring withdrawal of all foreign troops from Vietnam and leaving all political questions to the self-determination of the Vietnamese people.

Secondly, the U.S. realizes that the NLF must be in some

Young Americans For Frenzy

There is a certain limited pleasure in the fact that the Young Americans for Freedom felt compelled to search out two Negroes to sit on the platform at their pro-war rally in the DAR's Constitution Hall last week. One of the two, a bemedalled Eagle Scout, led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. The rally, billed as the climax of a two-month "International Crusade For Freedom in Vietnam," was by its own standards, a flop. A memo sent to all YAF chapters in December urged "that every one of Constitution Hall's 3811 seats be filled . . . this must be our priority job in the few weeks remaining." One local paper estimated the crowd at 2500, another at 2000. There was a lynch mob tone to some of the speeches. "The International Days of Protest," said Tom Houston, national YAF chairman, "was an occasion for all sorts of varmints to come out of the woodwork . . . lousy scoundrels come out of the ground." That moment of the evening intended to be most unnerving was provided by Rep. Bill Brock (R-Tenn.). He climaxed his speech with a purported quote from a wounded Marine who said of the peace movement, "just keep them in one piece, cause I'm going to be back in a few months and I want a few." —P.O.

How We Help the Good People of South Vietnam Enrich Their Lives

"As the battle rages, we will continue as best we can to help the good people of South Vietnam enrich the condition of their life."

—Lyndon Johnson

Saigon (AP)—To break the back of the Viet Cong, U.S. and allied forces are adopting a program of destroying houses and crops in areas which feed and shield the Communist forces. For years, Americans refused to participate in "scorched earth" efforts, leaving them to the Vietnamese. Now Americans are directly involved. They are trying to protect innocent people. . . .

The rich, intensely cultivated flat lands south of the Vaico Oriental River west of Saigon are "prime scorched earth" targets. U.S. paratroopers from the 173rd Airborne began operating there last week-end. . . . The paratroopers' mission was to round up all the people they could find, evacuate them north of the river to resettlement camps, and burn and destroy everything eatable and liveable. . . .

Every house they encountered was burned to the ground. . . . Every cooking utensil was smashed, every banana tree severed, every mattress slashed. On the first day, the men of C Company found more than 60 Vietnamese women and children weeping as they lay in trenches around their devastated homes.

—This Associated Press dispatch appeared in the early editions of the Washington Star, *Jan. 6.*

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. . . "Please Ask Him For Me, Why Is He Fighting Us?" U.S. Trio Relate

sense a party to any final negotiation, but the U.S. defines the NLF simply as an arm of Hanoi. Premier Van Dong told us that his government "can by no means be disassociated" from the third point in its Four Point program, which calls for settling the affairs of South Vietnam in accordance with the program of the NLF. The Premier said that what this point involved was the principle of self-determination at the heart of the Geneva agreements. Like many others with whom we spoke, the Premier insisted on the independence of the NLF from Hanoi. At one point in our talk he indicated his own surprise at the apparent strength of the NLF and its success in dealing with the U.S. forces. . . . Our conversations in Vietnam convinced us that many ingredients of an honorable solution exist. . . . Every indication is that there is no explicit requirement of the physical withdrawal of all U.S. troops prior to negotiations. . . . The Premier categorically denied the presence of "forces of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in South Vietnam," terming it a fabrication.

At one point in our interview with Premier Van Dong, he said to us: If you have the opportunity to see President Johnson, please ask him for me, why is he fighting us? We wonder if the American people are sure of the answer. Before we launch a new and more terrible round of escalation, should we not stop to consider whether the possibilities of peace have really been exhausted? . . .

By Dr. Herbert Aptheker

. . . Since Geneva and since 1956, the DRV has tried repeatedly, though without success, to normalize relations between South and North Vietnam. Furthermore, in three important respects—as was emphasized to me during this trip—agreements already have been offered going further than the Geneva accord. Thus the DRV—and since 1960 the NLF—have agreed to:

(a) the neutrality in foreign policy of the South Vietnamese interim government.

(b) the coalition character of such a government, and

(c) a prolonged process for the reunification of North and South, determined without outside interference and confirmed by a general and free election.

None of these three points was in the Geneva agreement. All—and this was emphasized during my visit to the DRV—illustrate the moderation of the DRV approach. Certainly their existence—undoubtedly unknown to the vast majority of the American people—refutes the Washington stereotype of the DRV as inflexible and stubborn, not to say war-seeking.

South African Mercenaries for Vietnam?

Johannesburg, Jan. 5 (AFP)—More than 70 former South African mercenaries from the Congo have signed contracts as jungle "combat experts" with the American forces in Vietnam, the Sunday Times of Johannesburg announces. The news was immediately denied by a spokesman of the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria who declared: "Any document these men could have in their possession to support their words can only be false." The paper, however, quotes a certain Jan Van Wijk, former lieutenant of mercenaries in the Congo, as saying that he and his comrades were solicited by officials of the U.S. Embassy in Leopoldville. The latter are said to have declared that their experience in the Congo would be valuable in the struggle against the Communists in South Vietnam. Van Wijk added that the first group of mercenaries had already departed for Europe and that reservations had been made for a second group. *—Le Monde (Paris) Jan. 6*

What SNCC Said About The War and Why Negroes Feel The Way They Do

Before condemning SNCC for its opposition to the war, every white American ought to ask himself: If we were a minority in a black Republic, if we and our friends were murdered with impunity, if we were underpaid and overworked by Negroes, if we were the last to be hired but the first to be drafted, how would we feel if we were sent to fight another white people on some distant Continent?

Do not be deceived because the NAACP has "disassociated" itself from the SNCC statement. We suspect SNCC says what 99% of U.S. Negroes feel. Two new murders in the South, of Vernon Dahmer in Hattiesburg, Miss., and of Samuel Younge, Jr., in Tuskeegee punctuate the bitterness. The denial of a seat in the Georgia legislature to Julian Bond for opposing the war does to a Negro legislator what no one would dare do to a white man. Against this background, SNCC's words need to be gravely considered. This is in part what its statement on the war said:

"We believe the U.S. government has been deceptive in its claims of concern for the freedom of the Vietnamese people, just as the government has been deceptive in claiming concern for colored people in such other countries as the Dominican Republic, the Congo, South Africa, Rhodesia and in the United States itself. . . .

"We ourselves have often been victims of violence and confinement executed by U.S. governmental officials. We recall the numerous persons who have been murdered in the South because of their efforts to assure their civil and human rights, and whose murderers have been allowed to escape penalty for their crimes.

"The murder of Samuel Younge, Jr., in Tuskeegee, Alabama, is no different from the murder of peasants in Vietnam, for both Younge and the Vietnamese sought, and are still seeking, to secure the rights guaranteed them by law. . . . Samuel Younge was murdered because U.S. law is not being enforced. Vietnamese are murdered because the U.S. is pursuing an aggressive policy in violation of international law. . . .

"We know that for the most part elections in this country, in the North as well as the South, are not free. We have seen that the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the 1964 Civil Rights Act have not yet been implemented with full Federal power and sincerity. We question, then, the ability and even the desire of the U.S. government to guarantee free elections abroad. We maintain that our country's cry of "preserve freedom in the world" is a hypocritical mask behind which it squashes liberation movements which are not bound, and refuse to be bound, by the expediencies of U.S. cold war policies. . . .

"We take note of the fact that 16% of the draftees from this country are Negroes called on to stifle the liberation of Vietnam, to preserve a 'Democracy' which does not exist for them at home. We ask, where is the draft for the freedom fight in the United States? We therefore encourage those Americans who prefer to use their energy in building democratic forms within this country. We believe that work in the civil rights movement and with other human relations organizations is a valid alternative to the draft. We urge all Americans to seek this alternative, knowing full well that it may cost them their lives—as painfully as in Vietnam."

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The Mansfield Report: A Record of Military and Political Failure

(Continued from Page One)

tion in which the majority of the population remains under nominal government control but in which dominance of the countryside rests largely in the hands of the Vietcong." The report says there is no certainty as to what might emerge from such negotiations but that the only "visible alternative" is "the indefinite expansion and intensification of the war," with "no grounds for optimism" that it could be ended soon or confined to South Vietnam.

The Monsoon and Other Moonshines

We believe the key to the situation is that Vietnam is Lyndon Johnson's Bay of Pigs. Just as that debacle opened Kennedy's eyes to the poor advice he had been getting from our military and intelligence establishment, so has the course of the war in Vietnam opened Johnson's since he agreed last February to the bombing of the North. This is what the Mansfield report in its quiet but grim understatements spelled out for Johnson. All the talk of the military experts about the monsoon turned out to be so much moonshine;, despite better weather and heavier bombardment, enemy attacks rose steadily through the year; an indication of the tempo is that 35% of all American casualties in Vietnam since 1961 occurred in the one month of November, 1965. For all the talk of better South Vietnamese morale "a high desertion rate continues." Heavy air attack in the South has not changed the situation on the ground: "What was controlled then by the Vietcong [i.e. in early 1965] is still controlled by the Vietcong." Shall we bomb "the Ho Chi Minh trail" more heavily? "These roads," says the Mansfield report, "are not easily susceptible to aerial interdiction." Shall we look for aid from the non-Communist powers of Asia? "Each," says the report, "has as a principal concern the avoidance of direct involvement." Internal reform in South Vietnam? Three years ago Mansfield reported to Kennedy that the Diem regime was "only at the beginning of a beginning in coping with its grave inner problems." Now he and his four Senatorial colleagues report to Johnson that Saigon is still "at the beginning of a beginning in dealing with the problems of popular mobilization."

He Just Wasn't As Fortunate As Lyndon

We are glad to hear that two British psychiatrists have decided that George III was not insane after all. One of the popular reasons for suspecting madness is that he seemed to regard the American Revolution as at bottom merely a French plot. This is not as fantastic as it may seem. We now know, what George III's secret service may well have reported to him at the time, that 90% of the gunpowder used by the colonial rebels in the first two and a half years of the war came from secret European sources, most of it through a fictitious private concern organized by that notorious agitator, Beaumarchais, to ship military supplies to America. (Bailey's Diplomatic History of the American People, citing Stephenson's "Supply of Gunpowder in 1776" in American Historical Review, 1925). The French monarchy had decided that the easiest way to revenge itself for the loss of Canada was "by encouraging the American rebels" with munitions and money (Bailey, p. 12). It wasn't lack of lucidity, it was lack of technology, that afflicted George III. If only he had had bombing planes—and advisers like McNamara and Rusk—he could have bombed Paris, forced an end of French aid, hung George Washington and we Americans would have lived happily ever after in loyal fealty to the British Crown.

The most important aspect of the report is its disclosure of the true situation in Saigon. "Much of Saigon's indigenous food and commodity supply," Mansfield and his colleagues point out, "depends on the sufferance of the Vietcong and on payments to them." They can blockade and starve it out. In addition "Saigon with its many vulnerabilities to sabotage and terrorism" is hostage for Hanoi. U.S. military briefings for VIP's have pointed out that if Hanoi is bombed, Saigon can be hit in reprisal; that if Haiphong harbor is wrecked, Saigon's can be turned into a shambles even more easily. This has finally been brought home to the Republican opposition. The U.S. is in a bind, and that bind is the best guarantee that Johnson is now ready for real peace negotiations. Privately, for the first time, Administration spokesmen are even talking of a coalition government. Now is the time for all neutral forces to put pressure on both sides to cease fire and to talk.

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